Evasion of Custom Duty on Import of Lactose

3402. SHRI JAGIR SINGH DARD: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to refer to reply to Unstarred Question 4438 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 19th August, 1992 and state:

(a) the details of the guidelines issued to Customs Authority and Drug Controller, Delhi regarding evasion of customs duty on import of Lactose;

(b) whether post imports check have also been similarly carried out in other States; and

(c) if so, the details thereof, and if not, the reasons therefore?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SMT. D.K. THARA DEVI SIDDHARTHA): (a) The guidelines regarding Customs Duty are not given by this Ministry. However, the Assistant Drugs Controllers (India) at Ports advise the State Drugs Controllers to conduct post-import check for compliance of the guidelines issued by the Customs Authorities.

(b) and (c) As per information furnished by the Drugs Controller, Delhi, three importers have violated the condition laid down by the Customs.

Similarly, one importer at Madras has also violated the condition by importing Lactose not utilised for Homoeopathy use.

Spreading of AIDS Due to Poverty

3403. SHRI SHIV PRATAP MISHRA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the poverty is one of the main causes of spreading of AIDS in the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SMT. D.K. THARA DEVI SIDDHARTHA): (a) and (b) The major mode of HIV transmission is sexual. The other modes are through infected blood-products and sharing infected needles during drug-abuse. There are, however, several contributory factors. In so far as poverty is concerned, its association with endemic communicable diseases is generally well-known. Poverty has various manifestations like unemployment, under-employment, low level of income, undernourishment, low educational level, limited access to information and opportunities and the generally subordinate position of women. It also causes migration from rural areas to urban centres in search of wage or salary employment and leads to fragmentation of families. This inevitably leads to rise in the number of those engaged in occupations which entail long periods of spouse separation and an increase in the demand for commercial sex. An increase in the demand for commercial sex in a developing economy usually leads to an increase in the number of Sexually Transmitted Diseases, many of which remain untreated. Another dimension of poverty is manifested in the lack of adequate opportunities and mismatch between the demand and supply of blood which leads to the growth of Commercial Blood Banks and Professional donors of blood many of whom suffer from blood transmissible diseases, like HIV. All these are factors which facilitate the growth and spread of HIV/AIDS.